Chinese activities along LAC

1167. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of the Chief of Army Staff reported in the Hindustan Times dated 15th January, 2001, to the effect that the Chinese activities along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) are creating some problem between the two countries;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether the position stated by Chief of Army Staff was brought to the notice of the Chinese Leader Mr. Li Peng during his visit to India;

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the matter is to be formally taken up with the Chinese Government and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of the Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) appearing in *The Hindustan Times* dated 15.1.2001 under the caption "Chinese activities along LAC creating problems".

The resolution of boundary question between India and China is outstanding. The two sides have also differences in the perception of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the border areas. Pending clarification of the LAC, the two sides have been carrying out normal border management activities including construction of tracks and patrolling upto their respective perception of the LaC. The perceived violations of the LAC are taken up by both sides through diplomatic channels and also at the ground level through Border Personnel Meetings/Flag Meetings.

The statement of CoAS referred to hereinabove needs to be viewed in the above context. CoAS had referred to certain degree of stabilisation on the LAC, even while speaking of the differences in the perception of the two countries about the actual alignment of the LAC.

India and China have been discussing the boundary question in the framework of the India China Joint Working Group and the India China Expert Group of diplomatic and military officials. Both sides have reiterated the objective of seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary

question through dialogue. The boundary question was discussed in broad terms during the recent visit to India of Mr. Li Peng.

During the recent visit of Mr. Li Peng, Chairman of the National Peoples Congress to India in January, 2001, our Prime Minister had discussed the boundary question with him in broad terms. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the progress made on LAC clarification exercise.

Light Combat Aircraft

1168. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
DR. KARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first prototype of the Light Combat Aircraft had a 20 minutes test flight at Bangalore on 4th January, 2001;

(b) if so, what further technology demonstrations are scheduled to be undertaken by the LCA before it enters the manufacturing stage and is added upto the IAF combat aircraft fleet;

(c) the delay already suffered by the LCA Project and the cost escalation suffered by it so far;

(d) whether Government has received orders/enquires for purchase of this aircraft from some countries; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The maiden flight of the first Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Technology Demonstrator (TD-1) took place in Bangalore on January 4, 2001 and the aircraft flew for 18 minutes.

(b) During the flight test phase, demonstrations of core technologies, Initial Operational Clearance (IOC) and Final Operational Clearance (FOC) is planned using two LCA technology demonstrators and five LCA prototypes.

(c) The LCA was planned to be inducted in IAF after IOC in the year 2003. There is a delay of about two years. The present sanctioned cost of LCA programme is Rs. 2854 crore.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.